



WISCONSIN WELLHEAD PROTECTION NEWS

Spring 2006



HAPPY SPRING!

I hope everything is going well for you. In this issue we congratulate the communities who have developed wellhead protection (WHP) plans in the past several months. You can also read about Drinking Water Week coming up May 7-13, the new "Wisconsin Land Legacy Report" from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), efforts to make groundwater information available for comprehensive plans, source water protection, an update on implementation of the new groundwater quantity law, new WDNR Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater staff and the revised "Arsenic in Drinking Water" brochure. Enjoy!

Dave Lindorff, Editor

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations are in order for a number of municipal systems who are or have been involved in wellhead protection planning to protect their water supply wells. Blanchardville, Bloomington, Browntown, Cashton, Darlington, Dorchester, Galesville, Hawkins, Iron River Sanitary District (SD), Juneau, Land O' Lakes SD, Prairie du Chien, Prentice, Readstown, Washburn and Whitelaw have worked with or are working with the WDNR or Wisconsin Rural Water Association (WRWA) staff on wellhead protection plans, ordinances or both. Source Water Protection plans have been developed

for the Shawano Area, Monroe Area and the Town of Harrison in Calumet County. You are all commended for being proactive in protecting your water supply.

Communities which have developed wellhead protection plans for new wells since the last newsletter include Evansville, Janesville, Mercer SD, Osceola, Seymour, Tomah and Withee. Hats off to these communities as well for recognizing the importance of wellhead protection. Good work!

There are now over 290 communities which, according to WDNR records, have adopted a plan for at least one of their wells.

If you would like assistance from the WDNR in getting started, contact me by phone (877-268-9355 toll free), by fax (608-267-7650), by email (david.lindorff@dnr.state.wi.us) or regular mail (Wisconsin DNR, P. O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921).

You can also contact Ed Morse, Groundwater Specialist for the WRWA, at 920-648-7578 or edmorse@charter.net for assistance with a plan for your community. In addition, Patrick Harrington of WRWA is available to work with local entities on a multi-jurisdictional level to protect public water supplies and to promote coordinated efforts to protect groundwater and surface water. Patrick can be reached by calling 715-498-0383 or emailing him at wrwa-sourcewater@sbcglobal.net.

Another option is to contact an engineering firm or a professional hydrogeologist to help develop a wellhead protection plan. Check your yellow pages for engineering firms or hydrogeologists in your area.



CELEBRATE DRINKING WATER WEEK MAY 7-13!

It's time to celebrate our valuable drinking water resources that we enjoy in Wisconsin. The American Water Works Association (AWWA) has designated May 7-13 as Drinking Water Week. Here's a chance to toot your own horn about how your community protects its water resources. AWWA has a variety of Drinking Water Week resources available at www.awwa.org/advocacy/dww. Please take the time to let others know about this valuable resource and the need to protect it.

WISCONSIN LAND LEGACY REPORT AVAILABLE

In 1999, the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board directed the WDNR to "identify places critical to meet Wisconsin's conservation and outdoor recreation needs over the next 50 years". This request grew out of a concern about protecting our exceptional natural heritage in light of a rapidly changing landscape in the state. Over a three-year period, the WDNR hosted numerous public and staff meetings to gather information, local knowledge, and opinions about Wisconsin's land and water resources.

Based on the information gathered, the WDNR has prepared a report titled "Wisconsin Land Legacy Report" which is now available. The report identifies 229 Legacy Places and 8 Statewide Needs and Resources that could be considered for protection.

The locations of the 229 Legacy Places are represented only generally on maps. Determining where protection efforts should be focused, which protection strategies would be most effective, and who might be involved will require a more detailed evaluation involving local landowners, citizens, various non-profit organizations, businesses, governments, and others.

One of the 8 Statewide Needs and Resources that are important to meet future needs is "groundwater recharge areas and places impacting public water supplies." The report stresses the importance of protecting the area which recharges a public water supply, whether that is a groundwater or surface water source. Visit the land legacy website at www.dnr.wi.gov/master_planning/land_legacy/ to find out more about the report and how to obtain a copy.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN WISCONSIN: WHERE CAN I FIND GROUNDWATER INFORMATION?

Wisconsin law requires that by January 1, 2010 all communities that make land use decisions including zoning and subdivision ordinances must do so consistent with their comprehensive plan. While groundwater must be included as one component of comprehensive plans, many communities, particularly smaller communities, do not have the resources or expertise to locate, evaluate, and incorporate appropriate ground-water information and data in their comprehensive plans. In many instances it is difficult for a community to know where to begin.

To make Wisconsin groundwater information and data more accessible, user-friendly, and likely to be used in the comprehensive-planning process, the Center for Land Use Education (at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point) and the U.S. Geological Survey, in collaboration with other partners, are developing a centralized website to provide access to groundwater information useful in comprehensive planning.

They will be surveying those involved in groundwater science and comprehensive planning to identify what information will be most helpful, and then creating the website to make this information readily accessible.

The researchers are also seeking towns, counties and villages to include in this project as pilot communities. Following a consultation with community leaders, a team of groundwater and planning experts will prepare a PowerPoint presentation and paper summarizing:

- Susceptibility of groundwater to contamination
- Current groundwater quality
- Changes in groundwater quantity
- Recommendations for groundwater protection or restoration

If you know of a community that may be interested in being a pilot community and receiving a presentation and paper about these topics, contact Lynn Markham at Lynn.Markham@uwsp.edu or 715-346-3879.

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

As you are probably aware, the WDNR completed source water assessments for all 11,000 plus public water systems by the end of 2004. Summaries of the assessments for all the groundwater systems are on the WDNR's source water assessment website at www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/swap/index.htm. All assessments for surface water systems are available in their entirety at the above website.

If you have questions about source water assessments, contact Jeff Helmuth, WDNR Source Water Assessment Program Coordinator, at (608) 266-5234 or jeffrey.helmuth@dnr.state.wi.us.

Now the focus of the source water program is on protection. Each community has a wonderful opportunity to review its assessment and use that information to tailor a protection plan to meet its particular needs. The WDNR considers source water protection for groundwater systems to be the same as wellhead protection.

By reviewing the assessment, a community can identify which well or wells are most susceptible to contamination and consider ways that the well susceptibility might be reduced. The community can then decide how best to reduce the susceptibility of the most critical well or wells.

There are any number of options that a community can consider, including developing and implementing an educational program, working with potential contaminant sources in the source water area, eliminating potential contaminant sources, buying property, adopting a zoning ordinance and developing a contingency plan, to name a few.

There is a variety of information and resources available at the WDNR's WHP website at www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/gw/wellhead.htm and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) source water protection website at www.epa.gov/safewater/protect. If you'd like help with source water or wellhead protection planning, see the suggestions on the front page of this newsletter.

GROUNDWATER QUANTITY LAW UPDATE

On Earth Day 2004, the Governor signed the groundwater quantity law (2003 Wisconsin Act 310). The legislation required the appointment of a Groundwater Advisory Committee (GAC) to (1) develop recommendations for managing water resources in two Groundwater Management Areas

(areas including and surrounding Brown and Waukesha Counties) and (2) report on how the law is working. These tasks must be done by December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2007, respectively. The Committee was appointed last spring and has met six times. Two technical work groups have been established to assist the GAC. One is Geology, Hydrogeology, Hydrology and Public Health; the other is Planning and Water Use. To keep track of the activities of the GAC, go to www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/gac/index.htm

Act 310 also requires the WDNR to administer a notification and fee structure for new wells, review high cap well applications for possible environmental damage, collect groundwater use information, increase inspection of private well construction and staff the GAC. Five positions were allocated to the DNR to implement the legislation and those positions were approved in the 2005-2007 biennial budget. Four of those positions were filled in February 2006. Steve Janowiak (715-421-7829) has been hired to perform well driller inspections. He works out of the DNR's Wisconsin Rapids Service Center. Barb Hennings (608-264-6021), Larry Lynch (608-267-7553), and George Mickelson (608-267-7652) have been hired to work in the Central Office on implementation of the groundwater quantity law. Barb and Larry are hydrogeologists, George is an engineer. The information technology specialist remains to be hired.

For a more complete summary of the legislation, go to www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/act_memo/2003/act310-ab926.pdf. The text of Act 310 is at www.legis.state.wi.us/2003/data/acts/03Act310.pdf.

NEW FACES IN THE BUREAU OF DRINKING WATER AND GROUNDWATER

In addition to the new staff to implement the groundwater quantity law, there are several other new faces within the Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater to carry out the Bureau's responsibilities. Phillip Spranger (608-266-5240) joined the Public Water Supply Section in January and is responsible for coordinating the water supply operator certification program.

The WDNR Division of Water has reorganized the structure in the regional offices and has hired Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater Program Supervisors to provide direct line supervision in each region. Three are new to the Drinking Water and Groundwater program. The Drinking Water and

Groundwater Program Supervisors in the regions are:

Robert Barnum – Northeast Region

Rhonda Volz – Southeast Region

Steve Ales – South Central Region

Larry Schaefer – West Central Region

Nadene Cable - Northern Region

ARSENIC BROCHURE UPDATED

The WDNR's Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater has revised and reprinted the "Arsenic in Drinking Water" brochure to reflect the change in the drinking water standard to 10 micrograms/liter.

If you'd like one or more copies of the brochure (PUBL DG-062 2006), contact Dave Lindorff.

Check out the Bureau's arsenic web page at www.dnr.wi.us/org/water/dwg/arsenic/index.htm for additional information on arsenic in Wisconsin's groundwater.

The Wisconsin Wellhead Protection Newsletter is a publication of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater. Its purpose is to provide current information on wellhead protection topics. It is published in the spring and fall and as needed.

Comments, questions, suggestions and articles are welcome and can be sent to: David Lindorff, Editor, Wisconsin Wellhead Protection Newsletter, Department of Natural Resources, P. O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921
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The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. 20240. This newsletter is available in an alternate format upon request. If interested, please contact David Lindorff, Editor.
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